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Editorial

CLASSICAL CLUBS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Organizations like Mr. Gray's "Roman State" in the East High School, Rochester (see p. 177), and the "Latin Society" in the Omaha High School (*Class. Jour.* II. 24 ff.), deserve more than a passing mention. Undoubtedly one of the things which militate against the study of the classics in the schools is the impression which the students have of the remoteness of the subject. In the minds of probably all boys and girls beginning their high-school work the one piece of information about Greek and Latin is that they are "dead" languages; and even in cases where parents are in favor of the classical course, where principals are liberal-minded, and school boards at least quiescent, it frequently happens that the youngsters approach the work with reluctance. They are very apt to contrast it with the study of French and German. They know that these are spoken languages, and they look forward to the day when they will be able to converse in them with something of the fluency of their teacher, or perhaps even charm the natives of France or Germany with their mastery of idiom and the purity of their accent. It is idle to attempt to bring home to their young minds the fact that in the study of any language ability to speak it is a strictly subordinate consideration, and it would be ungracious to hint that not even their teachers, unless they have been abroad, are in a position to speak French or German except in a way that would cause exquisite anguish to the ear of Frenchman or German. It is doubtful, indeed, if any set arguments could ever remove the sense of the remoteness of the classics from their minds. And yet it can be removed, and what seems to be the most effectual

method is that adopted by the teachers who have built up in their schools the societies already referred to. The students have been won by the inherent interest of the organizations, they have come to look at their Latin and Greek from a new point of view, and, far from regarding the study as consisting solely of "dead" material, they themselves have learned, in part at least, to live through some of the experiences of the ancients. They have not merely acquired some information about Greek or Roman life, but have actually realized certain phases of it. The whole subject has become vital to them. The large registrations in the classics in those schools where the organizations have been formed demonstrate the success of the method, and it is to be hoped that teachers in other institutions will adopt and develop the idea. Ambitious teachers will regard the extra work and self-sacrifice which such an organization entails as fully compensated by the satisfactory nature of the results.

LATIN IN THE SCHOOLS

In his paper¹ on "What Kind of Language Study Aids in the Mastery of Natural Science?" Dr. W. T. Harris, till recently United States Commissioner of Education, besides making a strong argument for the study of the classics, gives some interesting statistics. He states that in the public high schools in 1890 less than 35 per cent. of the students, or 70,411 in all, were studying Latin. In the private schools in the same year the Latin students numbered 31 per cent., or 44,950. By 1904 the percentage in the high schools had risen from 35 per cent. to 51 per cent. = 323,000, and in the private schools from 31 per cent. to 45 per cent. = 76,050. This makes a total of nearly 400,000 students of Latin in secondary institutions.

ON READING GREEK AND LATIN

Every classical teacher should read Professor Edward Clapp's article "On Reading Greek" in the *Educational Review*, Vol. XXX, pp. 243-49. Professor Clapp effectively depicts the plight of many a classical instructor. He describes the typical case of the man who, when he first begins teaching in a high school, is sincerely ambitious to increase his knowledge of Greek. He wishes to become

¹ Read before the Department of Superintendence at Louisville, February 27, 1906.